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CESSATION OF ALL NUCLEAR-TEST
EXPLOSIONS
URGENT NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE
NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY
GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT
REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS
ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-sixth year

Letter dated 11 October 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a statement made by the President of the USSR, M. S. Gorbachev, on Soviet television on 5 October 1991.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the statement circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 51, 53, 60 and 62, and as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yu. VORONTSOV

ANNEX

Dear Compatriots,

A week ago, the President of the United States, George Bush, put forward an important initiative on nuclear weapons.

We see in this initiative the confirmation that new thinking has received wide support in the international community. George Bush's proposals are a fitting continuation of the work begun at Reykjavik. That is my basic assessment. I know that Boris Yeltsin and the leaders of the other republics share this opinion.

In this statement I shall announce the steps we are taking and the proposals we are making in response.

First. The following actions will be taken with regard to tactical nuclear weapons:

- All nuclear artillery ammunition and nuclear warheads for tactical missiles will be destroyed;

- Nuclear warheads of anti-aircraft missiles will be removed from the army and stored in central bases. Part of them will be destroyed. All nuclear mines will be destroyed;

- All tactical nuclear weapons will be removed from surface ships and multi-purpose submarines. These weapons, as well as weapons from ground-based naval aviation will be placed in central storage areas. Part of them will be destroyed.

Thus, the Soviet Union and the United States are taking radical measures on a reciprocal basis leading to the elimination of tactical nuclear weapons.

Moreover, we propose that the United States should on a reciprocal basis completely eliminate all tactical nuclear weapons from its naval forces. Also on a reciprocal basis, we could remove from active units of forward-based (tactical) aviation all nuclear ammunition (bombs and aircraft missiles) and store them in centralized bases.

The USSR calls on the other nuclear Powers to join in these far-reaching Soviet-United States measures with regard to tactical nuclear weapons.

Second. Like the United States President, I am in favour of the earliest possible ratification of the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Weapons. This issue will be discussed at the first session of the reconstituted Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Taking into account the unilateral steps on strategic offensive weapons announced by George Bush, we shall take the following measures:

- Our heavy bombers, like those of the United States, will be taken off alert and their nuclear weapons will be stored;

- Work will be halted on the new modified short-range missile for Soviet heavy bombers;

- The Soviet Union will halt work on a mobile small intercontinental ballistic missile;

- Plans to build new launchers for intercontinental ballistic missiles on railway cars and to modernize those missiles will be abandoned. Thus, the number of our mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles with multiple individually targeted warheads will not increase;

- All our intercontinental ballistic missiles on railway cars will be returned to their permanent storage sites;

- As a step in response, we shall remove from day-to-day alert status 503 intercontinental ballistic missiles, including 134 intercontinental ballistic missiles with multiple individually-targeted warheads;

- We have already removed from active service three nuclear missile submarines with 44 launchers for submarine-based ballistic missiles and three more submarines with 48 launchers are now being removed.

Third. We have decided to make deeper cuts in our strategic offensive weapons than are envisaged in the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Weapons. As a result, at the end of the seven-year period, the remaining number of nuclear warheads in our possession will be 5,000 instead of the 6,000 envisaged under the Treaty. We would of course welcome reciprocal steps by the United States.

We propose to the United States that immediately after the ratification of the Treaty, intensive negotiations should be begun on further radical reductions in strategic offensive weapons by approximately half.

We are ready to discuss United States proposals on non-nuclear anti-aircraft systems.

We propose that we examine with the United States the possibility of creating joint systems with ground- and space-based elements to avert nuclear missile attacks.

Fourth. We declare an immediate one-year unilateral moratorium on nuclear-weapons tests. We hope other nuclear Powers will follow our example. This will open the way to the earliest possible and complete cessation of nuclear testing.

We are in favour of reaching an agreement with the United States on a controlled cessation of the production of all fissionable materials for weapons.

Fifth. We are ready to begin a detailed dialogue with the United States on the development of safe and ecologically clean technologies to store and transport nuclear warheads and methods of utilizing nuclear explosive devices and increasing nuclear safety.

To increase the reliability of nuclear-arms control we are placing all strategic nuclear weapons under single control and including all strategic defence systems in a single arm of the armed services.

Sixth. We hope that eventually the other nuclear Powers will actively join in the efforts of the USSR and the United States.

I believe the time has come for a joint statement by all the nuclear Powers renouncing a first nuclear strike. The USSR has long firmly adhered to this principle.

I am convinced that a similar step by the American side would have an enormous impact.

Seventh. We welcome the plans by the United States Administration to reduce its armed forces by 500,000 in the immediate future. On our side we intend to reduce our armed forces by 700,000.

In conclusion, I wish to stress the following: by acting in this way - unilaterally, bilaterally and through negotiations, we are decisively advancing the disarmament process and approaching the goal proclaimed at the beginning of 1986 - a nuclear-free, safer and more stable world.

The Governments, experts and departments will have much to do. The question is one of a new stage in one of the main trends of international development.

The question of a new Soviet-US summit meeting naturally arises. I have just had a conversation with the United States President, George Bush, and told him about the steps we are taking in response to his initiative. We had a good discussion. The President of the United States made a positive assessment of our proposals and expressed satisfaction with our approach to solving key problems of world politics.